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ON THE NATIVES OF OLD CALLEBAR, WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

By W. F. DANIELL, Esq.

Read before the Society, 28th January 1846.

Previous to entering into the ethnological details connected with these people, it will be necessary for me to briefly allude to that tract of country which they at present occupy. The Rio Calbary, or Old Callebar, formerly designated "Oude Calburgh," by its earliest frequenters, the Dutch, is one of the largest and most important of the rivers in the intertropical regions of Western Africa. It is situated nearly in the central portion of the Bight of Biafra, between the river Bonny and the Rio Del Rey; its embouchure being in Lat. $4^{\circ} 32'$ N., and Long. $8^{\circ} 25'$ E. At the commencement of this century, it constituted one of the ordinary marts for the slave-trade; but in proportion as this odious traffic declined, a more lucrative, if not extensive, commerce with this country has imperceptibly taken its place; our cotton and other home manufactures being received in exchange for exports of native produce. The entrance of this river is 10 miles in breadth, but contracts in size as it proceeds towards the interior, dividing, at 35 or 40 miles from its mouth, into two divergent branches; the first, or the one of the greatest magnitude, known as Cross River, flows from the northward for several hundred miles through a beautiful and fertile country, richly studded with native towns and villages, of which, and their various inhabitants, we unfortunately possess but little or no acquaintance. The second, or lesser branch, after a brief course of 50 miles, terminates in a small creek, which becomes apparently lost amid the almost interminable swamps that conceal its source. On this branch are located the chief commercial towns that carry on a mercantile intercourse with Europeans. They are three in number: Attarpah, or River Town, the metropolis; Abbutong, or Old Town; and Occorotunko, or Creek Town;

all of which are erected on sandy declivities of a moderate elevation.

The different tribes of people inhabiting the most of that maritime tract of country comprehended between the Rio Formosa, in the Bight of Benin, and the Old Callebar River, have unquestionably derived their origin from one common stock. A slight and cursory investigation into their physical character, language, customs, mode of life, and other national peculiarities, would readily point out many remarkable analogies that exist between them and their early primitive progenitors, and at the same time could not fail to throw some light on the characteristics of those petty nations that populate the shores of this portion of Western Africa. The great parental source from which most of them have emanated, are the prolific Eboes of the Nun or Quorra, which, for the sake of perspicuity, it will be necessary to separate into three distinct classes.

1. The Eboes Proper, which comprise part of the natives of the Rio Formosa, the natives of Warree Island, Rio Esclavos, Brass Town, and the Quorra.

2. The Eboes of the table-land between the Quorra and Cross River, which comprise the inhabitants of New Callebar, the Bonny, and a portion of the natives of the River Andony.

3. The Eboes in the country between the Andony and Old Callebar Rivers, which include the natives of the coast, of the several towns of Old Callebar, and of Cross River at its entrance. This arrangement, although somewhat deficient in numerical outline of the various tribes, will, nevertheless, be sufficiently correct to answer the purposes of this paper, taking into due consideration the great paucity of information that exists respecting them and their *locale*.

The early history of Old Callebar, like most of the other inhabited regions of Western Africa, is involved in much obscurity. Among the natives, little is known concerning the primary colonization of their river; and all the information I could glean upon this subject was, that their ancestors, many centuries since, had emigrated from a distant country up Cross River. This statement is the one perhaps

most in accordance with those views which maintain that the tide of population had radiated first from Eboe, on the Quorra; and such appears to be borne out by several curious peculiarities which exist in common, both in their physical structure and customs.

The town, which all the natives concur in asserting to be of the most ancient date, was, as the name implies, Old Town, which is now but scantily populated. For several centuries this place continued to be the metropolis, and principal trading depôt for merchantmen and slave-ships. About 300 years ago, many of the natives, from the harsh and cruel treatment of their rulers, emigrated to a sandy district, within a creek, five miles distant, and there founded Creek Town. Again, as this town increased in magnitude and prosperity, so did its government become the more arbitrary, and, from similar causes as the preceding, a troop of emigrants passed from it, and, having purchased a piece of land from the petty chief of Qua, settled down there, and erected River Town, or Attarpah, which, from its eligible site, proximity to the ocean, and other local advantages, gradually arose, under the judicious control of several able chiefs, to occupy that superiority which its rivals had originally enjoyed, and, with the exception of Creek Town, has now the supreme government over all the towns and villages in its immediate neighbourhood. The natives of Old Calabar, although of Eboe extraction, present some physical deviations, that serve to distinguish them from other tribes of a similar derivation. The natives of the Bonny and Nun, who are purely of Eboe descent, and therefore less amalgamated with the people of other nations, may be taken as the typical illustration by which we may make the comparison. They are generally of a short stature, slight form, and light yellow skin, differing in these respects from the inhabitants of the Calabar towns. I am of opinion that climate greatly modifies the physical and intellectual development of most African nations, and that people of different localities, but originally from one common source, after the lapse of some centuries, offer manifest alterations from their progenital standard. A more convincing proof in

support of the correctness of this statement could not be furnished, than is presented in the structural diversities that prevail between the inhabitants of the low swampy districts of the Bonny, and the more elevated sandstone regions of Old Calabar.

The average stature of the male population of Old Calabar may be stated to vary from 5 ft. 6 in. to 5 ft. 10 in., taking the inhabitants of the towns as a criterion in preference to those of the predial districts. The trunk and other portions of the body are in close conformity with their physical configuration; being somewhat robust and symmetrical in mould, with a tendency to great muscular development. In the chiefs, however, who indulge freely in a generous diet, and are accustomed to pursue more sedentary occupations than the inferior classes, these harmonious proportions are partially lost: excess of food; and want of exercise, leading to a deposition of adipose substance in various parts of the body, particularly in the mesentery and nates. In the female this redundancy of fat is encouraged in its accumulation by various artificial means, inasmuch as obesity in equinoctial Africa is esteemed as one of the greatest charms of a native beauty; nay, in several countries is considered as an indispensable requisite for the marriage state. The women, although considerably less in height (being from 5 ft. to 5 ft. 4 in.), are, nevertheless, proportionably larger in corporeal bulk, their extreme stoutness and breadth increasing their rotundity of form. In many instances, women have so increased in size as to render it a difficult matter for them to walk. The countenances of both sexes exhibit less prominently the melancholic and despondent expression of the Eboes, the features in their place assuming a more cheerful and intelligent character, with an apparently higher intellectual endowment. In the female, in the bloom of youth, the slim and graceful form, and bright and joyous face, often remind the stranger of the fair girls of his own more civilized communities. Although the conformation of the inhabitants of this river is in many respects precisely in accordance with the delineations of the Negro, yet there are some obvious deviations which require notice. Possessing, more or less modified,

the thick and massive cranium, narrow convex forehead, and compressed lateral parietes of the skull, the projecting jaw and oblique contour of the visage, they partially lose the thick lips, flat nose, large protuberant eyes, high facial bones, and other facial peculiarities of the Krooman—the most perfect type of the Negro—and thus gradually approximate towards a superior grade of the human family. The nose is frequently short and small, the nostrils but slightly expanded, and occasionally of an aquiline or European outline. The mouth is tolerably large, but the lips are thin, though inclined to fulness. The hair is short, crisp, and woolly, and presents no change from that of the African. The colour of the skin and complexion is of a dark brown, between the pale yellow hue of the Eboes and the jet black of the natives of Dungarah and Qua. It is smooth, shining, and, in the younger sexes, of a soft velvety texture, and also less unctuous; while, among the chiefs and higher ranks, from the constant cleansing of the body, its functions are maintained in the most efficient order. The adipose depositions in the female become gradually absorbed as she advances in life, leaving the long pendent breasts, and wrinkled and flaccid cutaneous integument, so characteristic of all the older Africans. It has been matter of observation, during my residence of some years among the natives of this and the other rivers, that the skin of youth is of a much lighter colour, especially in the female, than that of more mature age, and that the majority appear to be of a spare habit and of a delicate and debilitated frame. The facial aspect is also somewhat more elongated. In both sexes, but particularly in the women, the curved depression of the lumbar region is very conspicuous, and the thoracic regions, with the sacrum, and its muscular appendages, are proportionably prominent. The pelvis is much more expanded than in the European, but not so fully developed. The lower limbs seem short and stunted, from the great mass of flesh with which they are clothed, while the foot is large and flat, with the calves of the legs more elevated than in the European. The upper limbs of the Negro, according to the statements of some writers, are of greater

length than those of Europeans; but some half-a-dozen measurements afforded little or no difference: the hands, however, are of greater magnitude, and the fingers longer, probably from climacteric agencies. Circumcision is practised in both sexes; but not at an early period as elsewhere. This rite is of Eboe origin, and more or less prevalent throughout Western Africa. The old women of the family are the operators, and the instrument employed is a sharp knife or razor. The catamenia commence about the 10th year, but are occasionally deferred to a later period. All women at these periods are deemed unclean, and are not allowed to touch articles of food or clothing, inasmuch as it is thought to partake of the nature of a poison, and to produce serious morbid effects. These views are partly in conformity with the Mosaic law, mentioned in the 15th chapter of Leviticus.

Boys and girls, until the adult age, are entirely destitute of clothing, and a red or striped coloured zone of worsted is occasionally worn as a gala dress by the younger females on important occasions. The hair of the girls is invariably shaved off, with the exception of a small tuft on the vertex of the head, and is not suffered to grow until they have arrived at the dignity of wives, when it is then twisted into a number of plaits, decorated with beads. The hair of the chiefs is kept closely cropped, and then shaved into a series of beautiful arabesque patterns, which evince great ingenuity and taste. Portions of the body, and in women, particularly the face, are delicately tattooed in circular figures; and the anterior surface of the arm, in all classes of people, is ornamented with round smooth cicatrices, about the size of a shilling, from the effects either of vesication, or denudation of the cuticle. On either side of the temple may be noticed three small black spots; these are the places where the native process of cupping is performed, the dark marks originating from the absorption of the black carbonaceous matter with which they dress their wounds.

The government of the Old Calabar towns is a monarchical despotism, rather mild in its general character, although sometimes severe and absolute in its details. The king and chief inhabitants ordinarily constitute a court of justice,

in which all country disputes are adjusted, and to which every prisoner suspected of capital offences is brought, to undergo examination and judgment. If found guilty, they are usually forced to swallow a deadly potion, made from the poisonous seeds of an aquatic leguminous plant, which rapidly destroys life. This poison is obtained by pounding the seeds and macerating them in water, which acquires a white milky colour. The condemned person, after swallowing a certain portion of the liquid, is ordered to walk about until its effects become palpable. If, however, after the lapse of a definite period, the accused should be so fortunate as to throw the poison from off the stomach, he is considered as innocent, and allowed to depart unmolested. In native *parlance* this ordeal is designated as "chopping nut." Decapitation is also practised, but not so much amongst criminals as the former process, being more employed for the immolation of the victims at the funeral obsequies of some great personage. Drowning is sometimes resorted to as a substitute for the first means of destroying life. The chiefs hold petty courts for the punishment of their domestic slaves and retainers, but their decision, in almost every case of life and death, is, I believe, subject to the revision of the king, whose will is supreme and despotic. Inhabitants of the neighbouring countries often bring minor differences to these courts for arbitration, the awards of which are generally correct and satisfactory. A chief guilty of a capital crime, which comes more immediately under the cognizance of the ruling powers, is punished, more or less, by the deprivation of his slaves, or put to death by proxy; that is, one or two of his principal household slaves suffer the penalties of the law in his place. The most potent controlling influence, which fulfils all the purposes of a natural code of laws, is a semi-political and religious custom, known under the designation of Egbo. This peculiar governing principle appears to be a compound of a kind of freemasonry, and those fetish rites prevalent on the Gold and Slave coasts. The Egbo is subdivided into various grades, of which there are no less than eighteen or twenty; of these the highest and most aristocratic has been termed Grand Egbo. All grades of Egbo have their own appropriate

day of ceremonious observance, but it is only on days set apart for the performance of the mysterious rites of Grand Egbo that every house within the town is closed, none of the inhabitants being permitted to leave them, under the penalty of death or severe corporeal punishment ; and to enforce the strict maintenance of these dictates, two or three persons called Egbo-men, fantastically dressed and masked, parade the town, with a whip of extraordinary dimensions, which they indiscriminately apply to all who has not purchased the prescribed licence to be abroad. The public avenues during the continuance of these ceremonies are entirely deserted, and not a person is to be seen, where, only a few moments previous, some hundreds were congregated. All individuals may purchase these Egbo distinctions, but slaves are never permitted to obtain any other than the inferior grades. The king is at the head of the highest class of Egboes, and the other classes have usually a chief for their director, who is entitled the king of that particular Egbo.

Marriage, among all the native tribes of this part of Africa, is merely a civil contract between the parties. The bride, prior to her finally residing with her destined husband, sits in state for several days, surrounded with her female attendants, and profusely adorned with brass rings round her ankles, and strings of various coloured beads encircling her arms and neck, especial attention being paid to the decoration of the head, which is commonly surmounted with a brilliant tiara of ornaments. The friends of the lady, whilst she undergoes this antenuptial probation, bring various presents of money, clothes, *bijouterie*, and live-stock, most of which are killed in the presence of the bride, for the series of feasts given by her parents to the friends and acquaintances of the family. Polygamy is maintained, in full accordance with the customs of all African communities, in the Bight of Biafra, the number of wives each individual may possess varying in proportion to his rank and wealth. There is always one head wife, who has ample control over the others. Women, however, of all classes, are not so strictly immured in their apartments as those of the kings, who are not allowed to be seen by any male inhabitants under the pain of death. No

European is suffered to enter the harem except medical officers of the shipping, and occasionally supercargoes, to transact business with the king. Adultery, or any criminal intercourse, is visited with dreadful punishments, of which the termination is a miserable death. The dress of the women is simply a piece of chintz, fastened round the loins, and the men are similarly attired, the other portions of the body being left entirely uncovered. The women of Old Calabar have smaller families than those in the interior of Africa. Females of rank and the children of chiefs wear, encompassing their legs, twisted brass rods, brightly polished, which extend as high as the calf.

Many cruel and superstitious ceremonies occur upon the death of any influential personage, whether male or female. They mourn for some weeks, which is indicated by their binding a black silk handkerchief across the forehead, and neither washing their body nor changing their clothes; being therefore literally in sackcloth and ashes during the allotted period. Two or three days elapse after the inhumation of the body, when several guns and muskets are fired off, and a proportionate quantity of slaves decapitated to accompany the deceased into the next world. Wives, friends, and confidential servants, alike share the same fate, if the departed individual be a man of consequence. Upon the death of Duke Ephraim, one of the former kings of Old Calabar, some hundreds of men, women, and children, were immolated to his manes—decapitation, burial alive, and the administration of the poison-nut, being the methods resorted to for terminating their existence. When King Eyeo, father of the present chief of Creek Town, died, an eyewitness, who had only arrived just after the completion of the funeral rites, informed me, that a large pit had been dug, in which several of the deceased's wives were bound and thrown in, until a certain number had been procured; the earth was then thrown over them, and so great was the agony of these victims, that the ground for several minutes was agitated with their convulsive throes. So fearful, in former times, was the observance of this barbarous custom, that many towns narrowly escaped depopulation. The graves of the kings are invariably con-

cealed, so as, it is stated, to prevent an enemy from obtaining their skulls as trophies, which is not the case with those of the common people.

The houses in Old Calabar, belonging to the middle and upper classes, are inferior in every point of view to those of any other nation in this part of Africa, not only in the firm and compact arrangement of the building materials, but in that appropriate style of architecture, which conjoins strength and solidity with neatness in execution. The peculiar novelty of these tenements, is the different courtyards or open compartments, in which all are, more or less, subdivided, the whole of which, if thrown open, would occupy no small space of ground. Evidence of laborious and not unskilful attempts to bestow an air of comfort are perceptible on all sides, and more than ordinary attention appears to have been paid to their constant purification and cleanliness. These courts are usually of a quadrangular form, the first or external one having a small doorway or porch, for the purpose of ingress or egress. Some are fitted up with a series of petty chambers close to the walls, in which the inferior household slaves live, and others have a matted roof projecting a few feet from the wall surrounding the area, which forms, if I may use the expression, a kind of sheltered corridor. In the centre of these courts, the ground is excavated to about a foot in depth, corresponding to the eaves of the roof; the remaining space being elevated in the same proportion, by a hardened composition of sand and clay, much employed by most of the natives of Western Africa. Adjoining these clayey partitions, and almost encompassing the square, the cement-work is further elevated to the height of two feet, and dyed on the top a deep jet black. On important occasions, it is covered with mats and grass cloths. The inner surface of the walls is adorned with curious and elaborate arabesque designs, in which red, yellow, black, and white pigments are blended, with all the artistic skill of native professors. In the middle portion of the excavated area of the inner squares, there is frequently planted a small tree, which bears a beautiful purple campanulate flower. At its root is always embedded a skull, near which are small bowls

with other Egbo symbols. This human memento is occasionally to be found at the entrance of the interior chambers of the court-yards. The most remarkable architectural structures, however, which attract the attention of the stranger, are the massive wooden houses of the more powerful chiefs. Most of these mansions were constructed either in Clarence Town, Fernando Po, or Liverpool, and transhipped from thence in detached pieces, accompanied by European carpenters, who generally paid the forfeit of their lives in erecting them. They are built of planks overlaying each other, which, from the obliquity of their position, afford better facilities for the transit of the rain. As regards size, they are of a happy medium, and are of a proportionate altitude, most of them having a limited view of the circumjacent objects. The rooms are, in many instances, elegantly fitted up with all the gorgeous and luxurious furniture of European habitations.

In order to give a general idea of the mode of life of the upper classes of the natives of this town, it will be as well to transcribe from my journal, a few passages relating to a visit which I paid in 1841, to Egbo Sack, one of the principal chiefs of Old Calabar. "Upon my entrance into the room set apart for my reception and that of my party, the first object that arrested attention, was a small chamber or recess, within which were placed two or three sofas and ottomans, each carefully covered with a fold of chintz, and having the name of the owner emblazoned in gilt letters on the backs; a chest of drawers, a card-table, and two beautiful and exquisitely finished time-pieces, which, with half-a-dozen chairs, constituted the furniture of this little alcove. In the centre of this apartment was situated a moderate-sized table, covered with a white table-cloth, and garnished with its usual accompaniment of knives, forks, plates, &c., *à la Anglais*; while on the side-table were ostentatiously arrayed decanters of spirits, palm wine, and native bitters. The country wine, an exudation from the *Saguerus vinifera*, or wine palm, known in this place by the term of *Minniefoot*, was flanked by several bottles of champagne and other wines,

which were doubtless stationed in this conspicuous position, the more readily to attract the eye of the white stranger.

“ After a short and desultory conversation with our host, bitters (composed of the roasted rind of the sago palm-nut, steeped in brandy) were handed round, and the dinner immediately followed. It was carried into the outer compartment by female servitors, younger branches of the family, each bearing on her head a large calabash, covered with a square piece of white cloth or cotton. Most of these coverings (subsequently used as napkins) were richly embroidered with a number of minute designs, which must not only have greatly taxed the patience of the sempstress, but have required more than ordinary native skill in the execution. As we sat down in succession, a polished brass ewer, containing cold spring water, with a similar metallic basin and a large towel, were carried by two slaves to each individual, for the ablution of his hands, a custom, I believe, of oriental origin, and one that is almost universal in Central Africa. In this and the other rivers of equatorial Africa, it has been followed from time immemorial.

“ The first course consisted of several dishes commonly known under the vulgar denomination of ‘yam-chop.’ They were a heterogeneous mixture of boiled yams, plantains, palm-oil, several varieties of dried and fresh fish, shrimps, and a few green vegetables, well seasoned with pepper. The succeeding course (for we had only two) consisted of a dish considered by themselves as their *chef d’œuvre* in the culinary art, somewhat similar to the preceding. It was made with palm-oil, dried fish, and shrimps, but with a more abundant supply of triturated vegetables, with the addition of ochres and a rich soup, the whole being boiled together with the same condiments as the former dishes. Fufou, or mashed yam, was eaten with that dish, as neither boiled yams nor plantains were incorporated with the ingredients in its preparation. During the period of our feasting, each person was attended by a small black slave, who constantly agitated the air around him by means of large fans, and thus all were kept in a refreshing state of coolness. Upon the removal of the

cloth, a small jar containing longitudinal pieces of the rind of the wine nut (*Sagus pedunculata*), was placed on the table, in conjunction with large decanters of palm-wine, spirits, champagne, &c. ; for their country usages do not permit them to drink during the progress, but always after the termination of the meal. The ewer and basin were again called in requisition, and after a few hours of convivial enjoyment, in which our kind host fully participated, we departed to our respective vessels, amply satisfied with our cordial reception."

There are two markets in Calabar town, the first, termed the King's or Great Market, on account of its close proximity to the monarch's residence, is the one principally resorted to by the population of the surrounding country. The other, known as the Qua Market, from the circumstance of its being held on an open area on the road leading to the village of Qua, is one of minor note, and not so numerously attended as the one previously mentioned ; it is, moreover, only held twice a-week. The appointed hours for the assembling of the fair is usually from 10 to 12 in the morning, but it very rarely exceeds the latter period. A visit to one of these native fairs would furnish a curious and rather amusing spectacle to an European traveller who was not conversant with African customs in the Bights. Long prior to his arrival at these scenes of busy traffic and noisy contention, the low murmuring hum of the litigating crowd of purchasers and venders is plainly audible for some distance, from amidst the mass of domiciles by which the market area is enclosed. At a stated hour the natives of the predial districts flock in great numbers to the allotted rendezvous, burdened with the produce of their farms, or with fabricated articles suitable for the fair, which they advantageously display, with all the "savoir faire" of expert tacticians. The majority of the people sit on the ground in irregular lines or groups, encompassed by dense multitudes of all ages and sexes. Among the necessities of life exhibited for sale may be enumerated Mallagetta pepper, dried and fresh capsicums, bamboo, cola, and palm nuts, yams, bananas, plantains, pine apples, sugar-canes, ochures, palm-oil in jars, sweet potatoes, cocoa-nuts, cassada, groundnuts, limes, oranges, shadocks, papayas, honey, Indian corn in profusion,

the different culinary herbs ; goats, sheep, fowls, muscovy ducks, fresh and smoked fish, dried eggs, wild boars' and antelopes' flesh, with, occasionally, that of the young elephant, dried shrimps, shell-fish of various kinds, palm-wine, rum, fire-wood, salt, intermingled with a galaxy of European articles, such as silks, chintzes, ramals, muskets, swords, iron and earthenware of various descriptions ; to which might be added a modest assortment of country merchandize, comprising grass cloths and mats, shot-pouches, wooden fans, carved and plain calabashes, straw-hats, war dirks and habiliments, &c. No slave-market appears to be held in this river ; for, in fact, the export slave-market is wholly extinct, a more legitimate and just commerce having, within the last 10 years, completely superseded it.

The week here is divided into eight days, each deriving its name from the peculiar Egbo rites performed thereon, or from particular markets which occur on those days. They are termed—

Yampé-day, . . .	Little Yampé-day.
Callebar Sunday, . . .	Little Callebar Sunday.
Egbo-day, . . .	Little Egbo-day.
Qua market-day, . . .	Little Qua market-day.

Callebar Sunday is the principal day of the week, and corresponds with our Sabbath, but with this exception, that it is not kept sacred ; for although the natives possess some crude ideas of Christianity, derived from Europeans who frequent the river, they are, in every other respect, thorough Pagans. Every chief has, in imitation of the king, his only particular Sunday or holiday once in the week, and as Callebar Sunday is the day devoted to the festive orgies of the king, they, in general, dine with him, and the white visitors on that day. In the celebration of these holidays, feasting appears to be their principal amusement. In this the chiefs and their retainers are by no means bad proficients, and what with palm-wine and other intoxicating drinks they generally manage to spend the day much to their own satisfaction. If the chief is a person of consequence, he usually invites the masters and medical officers of the trading ships in the river, and they mostly spend with him an agreeable day. The

religion of the inhabitants resembles that of the Western African nations ; they recognize a Good and Evil Spirit, invariably propitiating the latter by means of superstitious sacrifices and oblations. As I shall, in a future series of papers, enter more at length upon the religion of Africa, I shall defer any further consideration of it till then.

Supplement.—Upon the Philological Ethnography of the Countries around the Bight of Biafra. By R. G. LATHAM, M.D.

The philological data for the parts about the Old Calabar River, that were collected by Mr Daniell during his residence in those quarters, were kindly communicated by him to me when he was in England ; and I believe that I am only fulfilling a promise, when I draw up the present short abstract of my researches upon the vocabularies of the countries in question. The subject was briefly touched at the Cambridge Meeting of the British Association. In the present paper I allow myself to go a little beyond the geographical area to which I at first restricted myself, and to deal with all the languages between the Lagos on the north, and the Gaboon on the south.

Nearly all that is known concerning the languages of this tract, has become known within the last few years ; a fact which we may verify by stating, that in the Mithridates there occur but three vocabularies for the whole coast between Dahomey and Loango. Our *present* data are as follows :—

I. *For the parts between Dahomey and Benin.*—The most northern kingdom, and the one that lies on the sea-coast, is the kingdom of Yebu, so named by Monsieur D’Avezac, the writer who has given us the best information regarding it.

1. *Esquisse Grammaticale de la Langue Yeboue*—followed by a vocabulary—*Memoires de la Société Ethnologique*, vol. ii. —Monsieur D’Avezac’s authority was a native Yebou, of the name of Ochi Fékoué. M. D’Avezac obligingly communicated this vocabulary to the editor of the Vocabulary for the

Niger Expedition (1841), where it occurs under the name of Ako, Eyo, Yabri, and Yarriba.

2. Douville's Nongo vocabulary. For the parts immediately above Yebu (lat. 8°), taken by Douville at Bahia, from a Nongo, or Nago slave, A.D. 1833. *Memoires de la Soc. Ethn.*, vol. xi., p. 145.

3. Ako vocabulary. *Specimens of African Languages* by Mrs Kilham.

4. Raban's Eyo vocabulary: London, 1830, 1831, 1832; collected at Sierra Leone.

5. Clapperton's Yarriba vocabulary.

6. Hio numerals in Bowdich's Ashantee. *Hio* is only another form of *Eyo*. The Hio numerals are shewn by D'Avezac to coincide with the Yarriba of Clapperton, and his own Yébou.

7, 8, 9. The Yngwa, Mosee, and Kumsallahoo numerals of Bowdich; closely allied to each other, and to the Hio.

10. Vocabulary of the Yarriba language; to which are prefixed the grammatical elements of the Yarriba language. By Samuel Crowther. London: 1843. This represents the language of Oyóh (Eyo, or Kakanda), in lat. 9°. The Ibakpah and Ibollah are dialects of this.

The modes of speech above mentioned may all be classed under the generic name *Yarribean*; and may be called dialects of the *Yarribean* language. In the interior, the *Yarribean* is conterminous with the *Fellatah*, *Haussa*, and *Nufi* tongues.

II. *Benin*.—For this kingdom our data are most scanty. In all probability, the *Benin* and *Yarribean* languages are mutually unintelligible.

1. A few *Benin* words taken by D'Avezac from the mouth of Ochi Fékoúé. *Mem. Soc. Ethn.*, p. 48.

2. A short *Benin* vocabulary in Mrs Kilham's specimens.

3. A few *Benin* words in Mr Daniell's MS.

III. *The Eboe language*. The *Eboe* Proper of the *Rio Formoso*, *Warree*, *Rio Esclavos*, *Brass-Town*, and the *Quorra*, seems to be conterminous with the *Benin* dialects.

1. Ibu or Eboe of the vocabulary for the Niger Expedition. Taken from a native when in England.
2. Mrs Kilham's Ibu.
3. Laird and Oldfield's Ibu.
4. Davis' Ibu. Mentioned in the Niger vocabulary.
5. Iboe words in Daniell's MS.
6. A few words in Daniell's MS. are marked *Eboe*, not of the *Quorra*. Only two or three of them are common to this list, and to the vocabularies of the Niger Expedition. One of these is Yarribean, and one Ibo Proper.

At Kakanda, in parallel 9°, the Nufi language begins. Of this we have

1. The Tapua of the Niger vocabulary.
2. The Nufi of Laird and Oldfield.
3. The Kakandy numerals of do.
4. Miscellaneous Nufi words in the Niger vocabulary.

IV. *The Bonny River.*

1. Bonny numerals in the Niger vocabulary.
2. Bonny vocabulary of Daniell's MS.

V. *The Old Callebar River.*

1. Old Callebar vocabulary of Daniell's MS.
2. The Kerrapay numerals of Bowdich.
3. The Karaba of Mrs Kilham.

I have little doubt as to these three vocabularies representing the same language. *Perhaps* this is the case with

4. (?) Oldendorp's Carabari-Mithridates.
5. The Calbra numerals of the Mithridates.

VI. *The Cameroons River.*

1. A MS. vocabulary in the possession of the Asiatic Society.
2. The Cameroon's (?) vocabulary of the Mithridates.
3. (?) The few Malemba words in Bowdich's Ashantee.

VII. Six vocabularies, allied to each other, represent a language belonging to these quarters, but which I have not at present the opportunity of placing geographically.

1. The Moko of Mrs Kilham.
2. The Bongo of do.
3. The Kaylee numerals of Bowdich.
4. The Sheekan do.
5. The Oongoomai do.
6. The Oonjoobai do.

VIII. Four vocabularies represent the language of the countries on the Gaboon.

1. The Cape Gonsalvo Lopez, or words of the Mithridates, very short (?)
2. Bowdich's Empoongwai numerals.
3. Mrs Kilham's Rungo.
4. *Vocabulaire de la Langue Ponga* par M. Pacifique Henri Delaporte. *Mem. Soc. Ethn.*, vol. ii. p. 197.

For Fernando Po I only know of half-a-dozen words.

The Mokko vocabulary of the Mithridates, the *Akuonga*, *Uhobo*, and *Kouri* vocabularies of Mrs Kilham, undoubtedly belong to the tract just gone over; although their precise geographical position is unknown to me. The languages of Portuguese Africa have their closest affinities with the tongues *south* of them.

Considering that the Yarribeian dialects are the only ones whereof our data approach a sufficiency, it is considered unnecessary to insist upon the provisional character of the foregoing classification. In respect to the ethnographical value of the groups enumerated, I have not a moment's hesitation in predicating of them a radical and fundamental unity, the differences lying within comparatively narrow limits. They all belong to that great group which may conveniently be called Ibo-Ashantee: of which they form only a part.